

## **BRAC IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY – May 17, 2011**

- **John Carman called the BRAC Implementation Committee to order at 7:35 p.m.**
- **Due to scheduling conflicts, the Committee agreed to the following modified Summer meeting schedule:**
  - **June: have the meeting a week early (June 14<sup>th</sup> instead of 21<sup>st</sup>);**
  - **July: have the meeting a week late (July 26<sup>th</sup> instead of 19<sup>th</sup>);**
  - **August: have the meeting a week late (August 23<sup>rd</sup> instead of 16<sup>th</sup>).**
- **Phil Alperson, the County's BRAC Coordinator, provided the following updates:**
  - **THE BRAC MOBILITY PROJECTS MATRIX IS POSTED ON THE BRAC WEB SITE.** It has been updated through May 17, 2011 and reflects the multi-modal approach the County, State and other stakeholders are taking to address the transportation impacts of BRAC in Bethesda – transit improvements, pedestrian and bicycle enhancements, intersection upgrades, transportation demand management, etc.  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/transpo\\_project\\_matrix-051711.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/transpo_project_matrix-051711.pdf)
  - **THE “TIERS AND PHASES” OF BRAC PROJECTS** based on funding is also posted on the web site. The Tiers and Phases were developed by MDOT and MCDOT in November 2009 with input from the BIC.
    - **Matrix developed by MDOT-MCDOT, October 2009:**  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/brac\\_projects-tiers-100609.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/brac_projects-tiers-100609.pdf)
    - **Summary of Tiers & Phases, updated February 4, 2011:**  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/tiers\\_phases-summary-revised-020411.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/tiers_phases-summary-revised-020411.pdf)
  - **FEDERAL FUNDING:** On April 14, President Obama signed into law the omnibus appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2011 that includes \$300 million for transportation infrastructure projects in communities with BRAC-impacted military medical facilities. The DoD Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) will administer these funds but has yet to determine a process by which qualified communities could apply for and receive funding. Phil is in frequent contact with OEA officials who are well aware of the urgency of the projects and expect to develop a process in the near future.

- **PROPOSAL TO DELAY WALTER REED BRAC IMPLEMENTATION BY ONE YEAR:** On May 12<sup>th</sup>, the House Armed Services Committee approved its version of the Fiscal Year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) which includes language authorizing SECDEF to postpone for one year seven specific BRAC moves that will have a crippling effect on traffic in the National Capital region, including the relocation of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center to Bethesda and Fort Belvoir. Phil said it is important to note that:
  - The FY12 NDAA so far has only been approved by the House Armed Services Committee. The full House still needs to act, and it is unknown whether the Senate version of the NDAA will include the BRAC language.
  - The language only authorizes SECDEF to postpone these BRAC moves. There is no requirement to do so.
  - Sept. 15 is just four months away. If the NDAA isn't passed in a timely manner, at some point the delay will be moot because the moves will be too far along to be reversed. There is no knowing if or when the bill will be passed.
  
- **MC 355 CROSSING PROJECT UPDATE:** Phil and Edgar announced that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has approved a Categorical Exclusion for the MD 355 Crossing Project. Simply put, FHWA agrees the Local Preferred Alternative – a combination of high-speed east-side elevators and a pedestrian underpass – won't have a significant negative environmental impact and therefore qualifies for federal funding. With funding on the horizon from the \$300 million congressional appropriation, Montgomery County can now move forward. The Planning Board, which has already had a presentation on the project from the County, will hold formal mandatory referral hearings in the future.
  - May 13, 2011 Categorical Exclusion approval from FHWA:  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/mcdot\\_crossingproject-fhwa-categorical-exclusion-051311.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/mcdot_crossingproject-fhwa-categorical-exclusion-051311.pdf)
  
- **TRAFFIC SIGNAL ON ROCKVILLE PIKE AT NORTH WOOD DRIVE:**
  - Phil addressed concerns raised within the community about the planned new traffic signal on Rockville Pike at the North Wood Gate. SHA's original plan was to have the signal fully functioning only in the A.M. peak hours to facilitate traffic entering the Navy campus. The light would be flashing all other times. Subsequently, the Navy requested that the signal be fully functioning in the P.M. peak hours to alleviate projected campus gridlock of vehicles queued to exit onto Rockville Pike.

- Concerns were expressed that the P.M. signal would cause backups along Rockville Pike and hinder the SHA intersections project to reduce gridlock. Andy Scott of MDOT clarified that the P.M. signal will operate on a test basis and SHA can discontinue the P.M. signal at any time if studies determine a negative impacts on area traffic. Jeff Miller of Naval Support Activity-Bethesda dispelled rumors that the Navy had “directed” the P.M. signal to be operational; rather the Navy had requested the signal and has been working with SHA and MCDOT for months to study its implications, and had discussed the P.M. signal at previous BIC meetings.
  - **PUBLIC INFORMATION OUTREACH:**
    - **CONSTRUCTION UPDATES:**
      - **4-20-11 Navy Update on Gates and other on-campus projects:**  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/nnm-c-oncampusprojectsupdate-042011.pdf>
      - **MCDOT’s Project Update, as of May 11, 2011:**  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/mcdot-projectsupdate-051111.pdf>
      - **MDOT Project Update, as of April 12, 2011:**  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/mdot-projectsupdate-041211.pdf>
      - **Consolidated Project Timeline for BRAC-related construction delays, as of May 4, 2011:**  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/disruptiontimeline-041111.pdf>
        - *REMINDER: Cedar Lane Bridge over Rock Creek will be CLOSED June 17 thru August 24*
        - *NOTE that SHA has altered the schedule of resurfacing projects, so that work on Old Georgetown Road will be completed before work begins on Wisconsin Avenue.*
      - **SHA Construction Schedule for “Phase One” Intersection Improvements:**  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/intersections-sha-tieroneschedule-122110.pdf>

▪ **WEB SITE ENHANCEMENTS:**

- **There is a new Interactive Map of BRAC transportation projects on the Home Page:**  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brcmpl.asp?url=/Content/EXEC/BRAC/index.asp>
- **There is a new Interactive version of the Project Timeline on the “Projects At A Glance” Page, which will become the Traffic Update and Commuting Solutions Page:**  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brcmpl.asp?url=/content/exec/brac/projects\\_glance.asp](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brcmpl.asp?url=/content/exec/brac/projects_glance.asp)
- **Bethesda Transportation Solutions BRAC web site: We Want You to be Ready!**  
<http://www.bethesdatransit.org/BRAC.shtml>

▪ **NEWS ARTICLES OF INTEREST:**

- **4-16-11 Washington Post: Bethesda faces BRAC traffic surge this fall**  
[http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/bethesda-faces-brac-traffic-surge-this-fall/2011/04/12/AFcnzeqD\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/bethesda-faces-brac-traffic-surge-this-fall/2011/04/12/AFcnzeqD_story.html)
- **4-18-11 County Executive Leggett Statement on Federal Funding:**  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/apps/News/press/PR\\_details.asp?PrID=7512](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/apps/News/press/PR_details.asp?PrID=7512)
- **4-20-11 Gazette: Bethesda seeks piece of \$300M pie -- Federal budget extension opens door for transportation funding**  
[http://www.gazette.net/stories/04202011/bethnew203257\\_32543.php](http://www.gazette.net/stories/04202011/bethnew203257_32543.php)
- **May 8 through 13, 2011: WTOP 10-3.5 FM / Federal News Radio 1500 AM WEEK-LONG SERIES: Numerous articles:**  
  
"BRAC Impact: Why your world is about to change" -- BRAC or Base Realignment and Closure will mean hundreds of thousands of employees, personnel, medical staff and patients re-locating or trading places. Traffic patterns will change, more cars will flood our already jammed roadways, and even local economies and housing markets will be impacted. It will be like moving a city within a city right here in our backyard.

- **WTOP 103.5 FM articles:**  
<http://www.wtop.com/?nid=977>
- **Federal News Radio 1500 AM articles:**  
<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/?sid=>
- **MCDOT UPDATE:** Edgar distributed the most recent update on MCDOT projects relating to BRAC, as of May 11:  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/mcdot-projectsupdate-051111.pdf>
- **MDOT UPDATE:** Andy Scott noted that utility relocation work will continue in earnest leading up to construction of the Intersections Improvements.
- **NIH UPDATE:** Phil Neuberg reported that NIH will soon open for egress only the South Drive gate at Old Georgetown Road, which has been closed for construction. NIH will encourage its personnel to use this gate as an alternative to exiting onto Rockville Pike.
- **PRESENTATION: MONTGOMERY COUNTY DOT PROPOSED COUNTY-WIDE BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) SYSTEM**
  - Gary Erenrich and Al Roshdieh discussed the County's study that focused on how a BRT system could be constructed on available Right of Way (ROW) and its ridership through 2020 and 2040. The system would cover approximately 150 miles along 16 corridors and have 150 stations (the ratio of miles to stations would decrease if the ICC is not factored). It would include intelligence systems to promote "queue jumping." The greatest expense would be in constructing maintenance facilities for the BRT vehicles, which are much larger than conventional buses. The study showed an impressive ridership which includes many new users of mass transit.
  - **5-17-11 MCDOT BIC Presentation (24 pp):**  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/mcdot-brt\\_bic\\_presentation-051711.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/mcdot-brt_bic_presentation-051711.pdf)
  - **4-26-11 MCDOT Countywide Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study: Executive Summary (22 pp):**  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/brt-mcdot\\_countywideexecsum-042611.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/brt-mcdot_countywideexecsum-042611.pdf)

- **5-3-11 MCDOT BRT Presentation to County Council (30 pp):**  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/brt-mcdot\\_countywide-councilbrief-050311.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/brt-mcdot_countywide-councilbrief-050311.pdf)

- **PRESENTATION: WHITE FLINT PARTNERSHIP’S PLANNED BRT:**

- Dave Winstead reported on the Public Private Partnership (PPP) that is spearheading the new White Flint planned development which includes donated ROW for a BRT along Rockville Pike in the White Flint area. Dave proposed the PPP as a model for expediting construction of BRT and noted the benefits of connecting White Flint to the Medical Center via BRT, and that this mirrors one of the corridors identified in the County’s BRT study. Dave discussed using BRT to connect a “Science Crescent” in the County – the Medical Center/FDA-White Oak/Johns Hopkins-Shady Grove-Seneca, and the availability of federal funds for BRT pilot projects. He suggested that White Flint is nearly “ready to go” and could form the basis of a Montgomery County application for federal pilot funds for the Science Crescent BRT. The White Flint Partnership presentation will be loaded on the BRAC web site when it is available.
- John Carman initiated a discussion of whether the County could request a portion of the \$300 million federal appropriation of OEA BRAC funds for an engineering study for BRT connecting the Medical Center to White Flint. Phil, Andy and Edgar cautioned that there are specific BRAC-related Intersections, Metro Crossing, and Bike/Pedestrian projects for which the State and County will request funds that have been discussed with the Congressional delegation in the crafting of the appropriation, and that until OEA determines a process to apply for and receive funds it is premature to commit to requesting funds for new projects.
- Some BIC members expressed strong support for requesting BRAC funds for a BRT study, but it was not clear to other BIC members what would be the scope of a BRAC-related BRT study or what would be accomplished. Phil wondered whether construction of the BRT project is too far away to qualify for BRAC funds meant to alleviate BRAC-related traffic. Phil, Edgar and Al Roshdieh repeated what had been stated in the MCDOT BRT presentation earlier in the evening, that Countywide BRT is one of the County Executive’s main long-term initiatives and will pursue relevant federal funding.

- **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- John Carman solicited comments from the floor. Karen Kuker-Kihl of The Promenade urged study and ultimate construction of a BRT along Rockville Pike connecting the Medical Center to White Flint that would serve her neighborhood that does not currently have direct access to rapid transit.

- **The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 14, 2011 (rather than June 21), 7:30 p.m., at a location TBD.**

**Committee members in attendance, May 17, 2011:**

Phil Alperson, County BRAC Coordinator  
 John Carman, Chairman, BRAC Implementation Committee  
 Dawn Chaikin, Locust Hill Citizens Association  
 Larry Cole, Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission  
 Edgar Gonzalez, Montgomery County Department of Transportation  
 Ken Hartman, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center  
 Ilaya Hopkins, East Bethesda Citizens Association  
 Ed Krauze, Bethesda-Parkview Citizens Association  
 Janet Maalouf, Maplewood Citizens Association  
 Debbie Michaels, Glenbrook Village Home Owners Association  
 Patrick O'Neill, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce  
 Phil Neuberg for Dan Wheeland, National Institutes of Health  
 Andy Scott, Maryland Dept. of Transportation

**Ex-officio:**

Ken Reichard (Senator Ben Cardin)  
 Susan Buffone (Council Member Roger Berliner)  
 Debbie Spielberg (Council Member Marc Elrich)  
 Jeff Miller, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda  
 John Lamberton, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda

**Other Attendees**

Nancy Abeles, Bethesda Crest  
 Yusef Battle, The Fit Solution  
 Gerald Cichy, Maryland Transit Administration  
 Sandy Dean, NNMC  
 Erin Donaghue, Bethesda Patch  
 Gary Erenrich, Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation  
 Sarah Gantz, Gazette Newspapers  
 Greg Humes, Chevy Chase Valley Citizens Association  
 Karen Kuker-Kihl, The Promenade  
 Marilyn Mazuzan, Town of Oakmont  
 Tom Robertson, Bethesda Urban Partnership  
 Al Roshdieh, Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation  
 Ben Schneider  
 Paul Seder  
 Robert Weesner, North Chevy Chase  
 David Winstead, White Flint Partnership